

In The Specification:

Please amend paragraph [0001] of the specification as indicated.

[0001] This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application serial No. 10/006,321 filed on December 4, 2001, now U.S. Patent No. 6,706,052, entitled “Longitudinal Dilator and Method”, which is a divisional of U.S. patent application serial No. 09/915,695, entitled “Longitudinal Dilator and Method”, filed July 25, 2001, now U.S. Patent No. 6,428,556, which is a divisional application of U.S. patent application serial No. 09/645,473, entitled “Longitudinal Dilator and Method”, filed on August 24, 2000, now U.S. Patent No. 6,607,547, which claims priority from U.S. provisional patent application No. 60/150,737, entitled "Longitudinal Mechanical Dilator for Vessel Harvesting", filed on August 25, 1999, and the subject matter hereof is related to U.S. provisional application serial No. 60/148,130, entitled "Apparatus and Method for Endoscopic Pericardial Access", filed on August 9, 1999, and U.S. patent application serial No. 09/635,721, entitled “Apparatus for Endoscopic Access”, filed on August 9, 2000, all of which applications are hereby incorporated by reference.